

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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46

ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 EA-13 NSCE-00 L-02 PM-03 EUR-10

IO-03 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01

PA-01 USIA-04 NSC-10 RSR-01 /075 W

----- 115891

R 031110 Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4068

INFO AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL WOA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

DCDR USSAG NKP RTAFB

CHQPDIMSPNIG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 11960

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOLHN PINT, PINS, VS

SUBJECT: TPJMC: PRISONER RELEASES

REF: A. SAIGON 11817

B. SAIGON 11865

1. THE PRG DEL CHANGED ITS STANCE ON THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS IT WILL RELEASE IN THE PW SUB- COMMISSION MEETING ON JULY 2 (REF A); THE PRG DEL UPPED ITS PROPOSED RELEASE TO 410 MILITARY PW' S AND 252 CIVILIAN DETAINEES (THE NUMBER THEY ORIGINALLY ADMITTED HOLDING) BETWEEN JULY 5 AND JULY 10. COLONEL DUONG HIEU NGHIA TOLD EMBOFF JULY 3 THAT HE REGARDED THIS OFFER AS A COMMUNIST PLOY TO CLEAR OUT ALL THE PERSONS THEY HAVE ADMITTED THAT THEY DETAINED BEFORE INVITING THE CANADIAN AND POLISH RED CROSS SOCIETIES TO INSPECT CONDITIONS OF DETENTION IN SOUTH VIET- NAM. IN THIS CONNECTION, NGHIA SAID THAT THE PRG DEL " CANCELLED- NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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DEFERRED, BUT CANCELLED" A PROPOSED MEETING OF DELEGATION CHIEFS AT 0900 HOURS JULY 2 TO CONSIDER A FINAL DRAFT OF AN INVITATION TO THE RED CROSS SOCIETIES (REF B).

2. THE GVN DEL AT THE SAME SUB- COMMISSION MEETING PROPOSED TO RELEASE 33 MILITARY PW' S AND 500 CIVILIAN DETAINEES IN ITS FIRST PHASE. COLONEL NGHIA COULD SEE NO DIFFICULTY WITH THE PRG- PROPOSED SCHEDULE, PROVIDED THAT SOME ASSURANCES OF SAFETY TO PERMIT THE TRAVEL OF ICCS OBSERVERS COULD BE WORKED OUT IN TIME.

3. THE ONLY REMAINING POINT OF DISAGREEMENT IS THE POINT OF RELEASE. THE PRG DEL DID NOT DESIGNATE THE SITES IT WOULD USE AS RELEASE POINTS. BOTH SIDES, HOWEVER, DESIGNATED THE POINT AT WHICH THE GVN WOULD RELEASE ITS PRISONERS; THE PRG DEL PROPOSED NORTH OF THE THACH HAN RIVER AT QUANG TRI, WHILE THE GVN DEL PROPOSED SOUTH OF THE SAME RIVER. WHEN THE EMBOFF COMMENTED THAT THIS DID NOT SEEM LIKE AN INSURMOUNTABLE PROBLEM, COLONEL NGHIA SHRUGGED AND SAID, " WE ARE IN NO RUSH" NGHIA ELABORATED ON THIS POINT: " IF THERE IS A DELAY UNTIL THE RED CROSS SOCIETIES COME HERE AND THEY CAN INSPECT THE DETENTION CONDITIONS OF THE OTHER SIDE, WE WILL STAND TO GAIN."

4. COMMENT: WHILE COLONEL NGHIA APPEARED NONCHALANT ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF NORTH/ SOUTH OF THE THACH HAN RIVER AND POSSIBLE DELAY, HE DID NOT GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT IT IS A REAL PROBLEM. NGHIA SEEMS TO HAVE WRITTEN OFF THE POSSIBILITY OF A MEANINGFUL VISIT BY THE RED CROSS SOCIETIES. HE APPEARED MORE CONCERNED ABOUT OBTAINING COMMUNIST GUARANTEES OF SAFETY FOR ICCS TRAVEL. END COMMENT.

WHITEHOUSE

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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